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NRO & USAF REVIEWS
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DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

11 FEB 1959



SUBJECT: Proposed Extension of the Thor Boosted Satellite
Reconnaissance Program

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1. An evaluation of presently established intelligence requirements for coverage of the Soviet Bloc considered in context with the schedules for both CORONA and SENTRY clearly establishes the need for the extension of the Thor boosted Satellite Reconnaissance Program into CY 1960.

2. The recently directed reductions of the number of ARPA DISCOVERER flights has resulted in Project CORONA's being cut from the twelve payload flights originally planned to eight such flights for CY 1959. In view of the development problems in the early phases of this program which introduce a factor of uncertainty in regard to successful launches and recoveries and the operational limitations imposed by darkness and cloud cover, it is considered essential that provisions are made for the full twelve payload flights in order to give reasonable assurance of accomplishing two complete photo coverages of the Soviet Bloc during 1959. Furthermore, in order to meet critical intelligence requirements for follow-on twice over coverage of target areas in CY 1960 an estimated eight additional flights will be needed. The reduced requirement for payload flights in CY 1960 as compared to CY 1959 is based on an anticipated improvement in systems reliability and performance. In summary, an additional twelve flights to those eight presently approved by ARPA for CORONA are needed. This requirement for the extension of the THOR boosted satellite operation is fully concurred in by the CIA.

3. Estimated funds to provide this program are shown on the attached schedule. FY 1959 funds in the amount of [redacted] are required to provide initiation for the hardware required. It is requested that funds in the amount of [redacted]

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